



SCHOOL COMMITTEE

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OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

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-IN SCHOOL COMMITTEE-

February 6, 2024

ORDERED:

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Public Schools has a historical commitment to teaching all students fundamental skills; and

WHEREAS: Being an informed, effective community member in the 21st century requires critical thinking as well as the ability to discern reliable information sources from misinformation and disinformation; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee update policy IHA, *Basic Instructional Program (First Reading)*, to add accessing, analyzing, and evaluating information in written and digital media to the list of fundamental skills.

File: IHA - BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

State law requires that schools:

...shall give instruction and training in orthography, reading, writing, the English language and grammar, geography, arithmetic, drawing, music, the history and Constitution of the United States, the duties of citizenship, health education, physical education and good behavior...

State law further provides that American history and civics, including, the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, local history and government, will be taught as required subjects in the public schools. Additionally, [Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 2 \(viii\)](#), provides that civics education shall include, "the development of skills to access, analyze and evaluate written and digital media as it relates to history and civics."

Physical education is compulsory for all students, except that no student will be required to take part in physical education exercises if a physician certifies in writing that such exercises would be injurious to the student.

The Fundamental Skills

The business of the schools is to equip all children with the skills, tools, and attitudes that will lay the basis for learning now and in the future. This means giving highest priority to developing skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and solving numerical problems. **This also means prioritizing the instruction of how to access, analyze, and evaluate information in written and digital media.**

The first claim of the community's resources will be made for the realization of these priorities. School dollars, school talent, school time, and whatever innovation in the program is required must be concentrated on these top-ranking goals. No student should be bypassed or left out of the school's efforts to teach the fundamental skills. Schooling for basic literacy must reach all students, in all neighborhoods, and from all homes.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.c.71, §§1, [2](#), [3](#) & [13](#)

603 C.M.R. 26:05

Adopted: June 16, 2009

Motion: #24-030

cc:

Member Rachel
Mayor Simmons
Member Harding
Member Hudson
Vice Chair Hunter
Member Rojas
Member Weinstein
Superintendent